



The Florida House of Representatives

Chris Sprowls
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

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Florida House Files Bill to Protect Floridians from COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (*Jan. 7, 2021*) — Today, Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls pledged strong support for and fast-tracked legislation filed today to safeguard Florida consumers who are targeted by COVID-19 vaccine scams. The FBI, FTC and Florida state agencies have warned Americans to be on the lookout for fake websites and other communications that offer access to vaccines in exchange for exorbitant sums.

“It is a priority of the Florida House to protect Floridians who just want to get a COVID vaccine without being fleeced,” said Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls. “As a former state prosecutor, I know all too well how these operators prey on our consumers, and I will make it our mission to end their practice here.”

Florida Representative Ardian Zika, a businessman from Pasco County, filed HB 9 today. The legislation establishes criminal penalties and authorizes civil remedies for those intending to defraud regarding the availability of or access to a COVID vaccine.

“Floridians need to be on the lookout for vaccine scams but these criminals are using very slick, official-looking websites to run their operations,” said Representative Zika. “This legislation puts them on notice and helps protect Floridians from getting scammed.”

On the second day of the House’s first interim committee meeting week, the Pandemics and Public Emergencies Committee will take up HB 9 for a vote during its 9 a.m. meeting on Jan. 14 in Sumner Hall in the House Office Building. That meeting will be available for live viewing at www.TheFloridaChannel.org.

Regarding HB 9, Pandemics and Public Emergencies Committee Chair Tom Leek said, “The last thing Floridians need during a pandemic is to worry about is being defrauded over a vaccine they think they’re getting. Our job as state legislators is to help ensure that Floridians are getting what they pay for, especially when it comes to their health and well-being.”

The Florida Legislative Session begins March 2, 2021.

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